9: Gladwin E-5 (1940) 1948 NO6 Comanche NO6

had the right to give his sister, often against her will, to any acquaintance who gave him presents of arrows or a horse or two. A male cousin also seems to have had this right in some cases.

After the age of ten or so, brothers and sisters were supposed to avoid each other's company to a certain extent, especially if they should be left alone, and could never undress in each other's company, even if they lived in the same tipi. At the age of fifteen, boys might have a separate hut of hide-covered branches or even their own tipi in which to sleep and entertain any lady-friends they might have.[19] Brothers and sisters should not joke with each other, nor mention anything to do with relations between the sexes.

Behavior between more distantly related siblings seems to depend on how well they know and like each other and, of course, on how much they see of one another. As noted before, however, the brother-sister restrictions seem to remain in force almost indefinitely.

Parent-Child. Parents do not seem to have been unusually fond of children, especially in the old days when they were a considerable nuisance to be transported about, and guarded from danger. Discipline was largely in the hands of older siblings, as noted above, when there were any. Instruction of the girls was often taken on by the maternal grandmother, who frequently lived with the family, and the maternal uncle and older brothers taught the boys. Their father was apt to be out on the warpath, especially when they were young, and their mother was busy with the housework—cooking, making clothes, and so on.

As the children grew up, there seems to have been a gradual change in the attitude of the parents toward them. Younger children in a family, or of several families living nearby, formed a somewhat undifferentiated group; they were not mistreated, nor even seriously neglected by their parents, but were only rarely singled out for personal attention. Then, when they achieved the age of ten or so, they began to emerge as definite personalities impinging on the adult world; the father would begin to coach his son in the art of war, and the girl's mother would initiate her daughter more seriously in the housework.

Each parent usually had a favorite among the children, frequently the oldest, though a woman might spoil her youngest daughter if she realized she was to be her last. This child would receive more attention, presents, etc., than the others, who were often quite jealous. However the hostility they could express was limited, because the parent would usually side with the favorite if any squabbles occurred. Somewhat distinct from this is the quite institutionalized favorite-child pattern, found commonly in Plains societies; the Comanche themselves seem to recognize the distinction. In wealthy families, small gifts given by poorer people to the favorite child carried with them an obliga-

[19] This was done primarily to avoid harming the boys' power through contamination from the family cooking and food. Linton, personal communication.

9: Gladwin E-5 (1940) 1948 NO6 Comanche NO6

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855 tion for the parents to make a munificent return gift, preferably with a horse, and for the child to give away the original gifts to less fortunate children. This child wore especially fine clothes, rarely had any work to do, was spoiled by everyone, could order his or her siblings and even parents around at will, was never forced into marriage, and was generally cock o' the walk. Such a child [595] was usually the offspring of the father's favorite wife (a wealthy man nearly always had several wives), so that jealousy usually was present among the other wives too, and they would neglect and annoy the favorite child whenever they thought they could get away with it. However, if the child were a boy, he would fairly soon start going off on war-parties, while a girl, not having her marriage arranged for the convenience of the parents, would probably marry [158] a man of some means and reputation, and move away also. It should be noted that favorite children never became *pu'ku'ci?*.[11] according to our informants.

Girls who were not favorites frequently had their marriages arranged for them by their fathers. While the girl was anxious to marry a glamorous warrior, the father preferred a poor but industrious man who would stay around the home and tend his stock for him, perhaps for two or three years or, with the inducement of additional daughters as rewards for good and continued service, [727] almost indefinitely. A captive (especially a Mexican) made the most depend- [554] ent, and hence reliable, son-in-law of all, though the lowered prestige of the resultant half-Comanche grandchildren was a deterrent to this practice.

597 Adoption of children was fairly common, especially for boys into families without any; in this case, they might become "favorite children." Proper [835] relationship terms for a son or daughter were applied; rigorous incest regulations did not hold with adopted children, but there was strong disapproval of marriage of adoptive siblings if they had been brought up together for a number of years. Close friends of sons might also be adopted when comparatively mature; marriage with them does not seem to have been so clearly outlawed though no cases are recorded. In connection with the early maturity and independence of boys, it is interesting to note that this type of adoption was considered to be solely a matter to be arranged between the boy and his prospective new family—his parents had no influence in the arrangements. There is some evidence that fairly immediate descendants of adopted children were, if possible, married to bona fide members of the family in order to get them more firmly grafted onto the family tree. While the fact that the child was not a blood relative was never forgotten, it appears that a person adopted into a family became practically as much a member of it as one born within it, and generally ceased using the old terms of relationship toward his original family,

[11] *pu'ku'ci?* were adults following institutionalized patterns of "silly" behavior. This behavior readily lends itself to at least superficial interpretation as an escape mechanism for maladjusted people. This term was also applied to "difficult" children, a separated usage, though of course related.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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Sanapia, 1895–1968

Early Childhood

SANAPIA WAS BORN at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in the spring of 1895 in a tepee encampment of *yapai* Comanches who had traveled to Fort Sill for rations from the vicinity of Medicine Park, Oklahoma. As with most Comanche women her age, Sanapia only knows that she was born in the spring and has therefore arbitrarily set her birth date at May twentieth.

Her father was Comanche and her mother Comanche-Arapaho. Sanapia was the sixth in a family of eleven siblings, having five older brothers, three younger brothers, and two younger sisters. As is still the custom among the more traditionally oriented Comanches, the maternal grandmother is very instrumental in rearing her daughter's children. Both Sanapia's mother and her mother's older brother were eagle doctors.

> Yeah, my mother doctored . . . she could do anything. One time it was her playmate one time they were playing and she died. They put her buckskin dress on her, and you know in them days when anybody died they put red paint all over their face and their arms and their feet and then they put them away. They fix her up like that. My mother was playing with the rest of the kids. She was just a little bitty girl. She said, "I'm going to my tent and go to sleep. After awhile I play some more." Later these kids came to her and said, "They want you over there. Go to doctor." And she was just about ten years old that time. She went down there and she said, "No, no, she not going to go. I don't want her to die. I'll fix her up." She told all those people that, "You all get out. I'll fix her up." And she was sitting in that tent making all kinds of racket and pretty soon that little girl get up. She came back to life and lived many years. My mother died before her.

Sanapia's maternal uncle was also very active among Comanche peyotists, leading peyote meetings throughout southern Oklahoma. Sanapia also counts among her relatives a paternal grandfather who was an important *yapai* leader in the

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white man's eyes. Sanapia remembers this point well, for it was she, as her mother's favorite daughter, who was called upon to take her mother to the nearby towns and act as interpreter. 115 159 177 593 191

Lots of times I would be playing or something and I have to go with her . . . speak for her. I tell her, "You can talk English good, why do I have to talk for you?" She just tell me to come on. She said that when the white mans learn Comanche talk, she would learn white man language. She was real stubborn, I guess you would say, about things like that. You know, one time my father put these little napkin rings like they used at school on our table and he told us kids to use them. Well, my mother got them and put bead work on them with each our name on each one. My father got mad at that, but my mother told him that she wasn't no white man, she was Indian. They would talk like that a lot but they stay together till they both dead. They have some run-ins though. Like once I come back from school with these button-top shoes. My mother made me take them off because she said they would cripple my feet. My grandmother told me that too. But my father liked them and made me wear them. I thought they looked good, you know, but they hurt if you wear them long enough. I go barefoot a lot when I was a real young woman. 115 159 177 593

According to Sanapia's memory, her father never took issue with the mother's doctoring activities or her involvement with the peyotists. From Sanapia's stories of childhood it seems that it was the mother who would react violently against the father's attempt to introduce elements of white culture into the home. The father apparently never directly attacked the conservative Comanche ways but preferred to ignore them, withdraw from them, or illustrate how the white man's "road" was superior.

Sanapia's memories of her maternal grandmother are the fondest and most elaborated. It was this grandmother who took the greatest hand in rearing the children, though the father and mother acted as final authorities. It was also this grandmother who continually emphasized to Sanapia the importance of remembering the old ways and old stories, even suggesting that she keep a diary or journal of her life. 115 159 603 177

My grandmother was just a little bitty woman. She stayed in her tepee south of the house because she didn't like houses. She said that they good for keeping dogs and horses and that's all. A lot of old peoples would used to joke like that. She sure was good to me . . . take care of me all the time when I was just a small girl. She wrap me in her blanket when I was little, even when I get to be five years old . . . pretty big girl by then . . . and she carry me around. She said, "I want you to save your feet, don't let your legs get tired because you got a long time to live." She carry me around down on the creek, doing nothing, until I get tired and then she take me back to her tent. She rocks me to sleep and if I wake up way in the night, she would give me a meat ball . . . pound meat with sugar on it. Then she poke up the fire and tell me old stories. She told me how to make real old time Indian bags out of this softest buckskin so I could carry around my own little meat balls in there. Bag looks like a flat bag sort of is the kind of one I had. She tell me always to remember what she tells me and I did. She tell me that I should write it down, but at that time I didn't even know what writing is, but my grandma did. She tell me that a lot of white people would come into our country. That was even before I seen a lot of white [342] 115 159 603 855 [252] [415]

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
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115 159 603 855 [763] people like now. I remember that when I was small I watched long bunch of white peoples come in here and up to today that's almost all there is around here. In them days, no fences and no white people. And my grandmother knew that before it happened. She know lot of things like that too. And when what she says happens I was sure surprised, but it made me believe her better. She had a big hunk out of her ear. She cut her ear up when her brother died in the war . . . to show how sorry she was, but I didn't know that and I would joke her and tell her, "What's the matter with your ear? Did a mule bite it off?" She would tell me what happened to it. I would ask her all sorts of things and she would always tell me something on it. She's the one who told me to take my mother's doctoring-way when I was getting older. I didn't want it because I thought it was silly or nasty, but my grandmother said that soon in the future there wouldn't be hardly any Indian doctors left and she sure was right on that. I really cried when she pass on, because she had been so good to me, bringing me along like she did. So now, up to today, my daughters got kids and my son. I try to be like my grandma. I tell them old ways that I can remember, but, you know, they don't hardly care for it. They getting to be more like white peoples every year that pass. My grandmother told me all this would happen too.

115 159 604 756 755 Sanapia's maternal uncle, an eagle doctor like her mother, was very active among peyotists in southern Oklahoma. Her first recollections of peyote meetings were those which were directed by her uncle, and it was through him that Sanapia later learned the manifold uses of peyote as a medicine. Her mother also utilized peyote as a medicine, though not to the extent to which her uncle employed it. Sanapia's paternal grandfather was also a "strong peyote man." Thus early in life Sanapia was impressed with the importance of peyote by two very influential family members.

Religious Influences

115 159 771 Sanapia was reared in an atmosphere colored by three basic approaches to supernaturalistic realms—the Christianity of her father, the peyotism of her uncle and paternal grandfather, and the more customary Plains pattern of vision quests and guardian spirits as embodied by her mother, the eagle doctor. Through this liberal education she learned the basic tenets of each and managed to syncretically combine elements of all three into the validating and supportive unity by which she now lives and finds the rationalization for her own supernatural prerogative as a Medicine woman.

She quite naturally deemphasizes the differences and emphasizes the similarities in these three supernaturalistic systems. She is very fond of making comments like the following:

115 159 771 755 You know, the bible says that when Jesus was on earth he would heal people. His disciples had that same power as Him, and I know I'm just like them. I got power in my hands to heal peoples too. You can read the bible to find out that Jesus gives those people power to help people that got sickness, and it's just like that with me. When I pray, I feel just like, well, the Lord says, "You go heal that person. I give you power to do that and give you a good mind . . . put power in your hands. When you touch anybody like that, you'll get them well." That's what I always thought, you know. Use the bible like that.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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595 one wife was purchased. Sisters often trained themselves so that they could be wives of the same man, one learning to be a good horsewoman and the other to be expert in the tanning of hides and making of clothes, one complementing the other, in the hope that they might be purchased at the same time and so remain together.

If, in due time, there came to be need of a third wife, the rule was that she be young and healthy, capable of taking over the burdens of the older women. When the young wife bore a baby for the camp there was rejoicing, not only by the husband but by the other wives as well. This was especially true if it was a boy baby. (This part appealed to me. Just think of a family life where they never ran out of babies!)

595 I never once saw an older wife scold or mistreat the child of
855 another wife. In fact, I never saw a Comanche woman mistreat any woman's child. It was no uncommon sight to see one wife caring for the children, while the other wife or wives were working, say, at hauling up wood for the camp.

At the time when I knew them, the Comanches were still living
657 strictly a camp life. Where it was possible, the Indian Department had
423 fenced the family allotments all into one enclosure or pasture, using
417 four strands of barbed wire and posts every rod. The department had
342 also built each family a box house—in most instances measuring fourteen by twenty-eight feet, shingle-roofed, and set on a foundation of rock piers about four feet apart.

342 Obviously, a family consisting of the husband, two to three wives,
592 and several children could not live in a space that small. For spring, summer, and fall use a family would construct a brush arbor. Forked posts were cut so as to be about seven or eight feet tall when the lower end was set in the ground. Poles were laid from one fork to another, and in turn numerous cross poles were laid on them. Then a thick layer of brush with leaves was piled on the cross poles. This layer was thick enough to repel the sun's heat and shed the water from a reasonable rain. From time to time, as they were needed, additional layers of brush were applied.

This arbor served as living quarters for the family the greater part of the year. Since the sides were left open, whatever breeze there was,
352 from whichever direction it came, was utilized. Platforms, placed on
513 forked sticks and about three feet from the ground, served as beds.

252 The cooking was done on an open fire, just below the bank of a

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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When our store opened for business, we had everything to learn about merchandising, and so we had no customs or inhibitions to overcome. I believe this operated to our advantage, especially with the Indian business. Mother selected our dry goods, and her good taste resulted in our having an attractive array of bolts of calico and gingham. Having observed the Indian women's taste in colors and the way they trimmed their clothes, she bought boxes and boxes of braid to match the colors of the piece goods. This unusual display of dry goods undoubtedly did much to attract the Indian women to our store from the very start.

I soon learned the Comanche words and phrases I needed to wait on them. I had no dictionary—as far as I know, the Comanche words had never been listed and defined. My learning was pretty much catch-as-catch-can. I found I could go a long way with the expression *Osh-a-him*. This can be translated as "What is the Comanche word for this?" or "What is this?" or "Who is that man?" or "Whose horse is this?" or "What is that man's name?" and so on and on and on, by inflection of the voice, pointing, and the use of signs.

Boylike, I was much amused at the women's way of shopping. When a family came into the store to trade, one wife would come to the grocery counter and start buying. She knew exactly what she wanted and the amount she wanted. No matter if she had been to Carlisle, if she wanted fifty cents' worth of sugar she said, "*Pina*—four bits." When I had weighed out the sugar, she paid for it and then asked for the next article, always by its Indian name and in amounts divisible by a bit, or 12½ cents. Money to the Comanches was two bits, four bits, six bits, dollar, dollar two bits, etc. Buying in this fashion would continue until all the first wife's wants were satisfied. Then she would place her purchases in a clean flour sack she had brought along for the purpose, and would rejoin the wife group.

Now a second wife would come to the counter, and in the majority of cases would buy exactly what the first wife had bought—and in identical amounts. Then it was wife number three's turn. The only variation would come when they bought the sweets for the children. Each wife bought for her own children, generally some variety of cookies that we kept on display, under glass to protect them from dirt and flies. Usually the older children had their own money and made their own purchases.